

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
NEWNAN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

NIKIA WAKEFIELD;
INDIA MIDDLETON,

Defendants.

CRIMINAL ACTION FILE
NO. 3:21-cr-6-TCB

O R D E R

This case comes before the Court on Magistrate Judge Russell G. Vineyard's report and recommendation (the "R&R") [324], which recommends that the motion [228] of Defendants Nikia Wakefield and India Middleton to dismiss the indictment due to selective prosecution be denied. It also recommends denying Defendants' perfected motion [313] to dismiss the indictment. No objections have been filed.¹

¹ Defendants filed an unopposed motion [326] to extend the deadline to file objections, which the Court granted [327]. The parties had until July 5, 2022 to file objections. Nevertheless, no objections were filed.

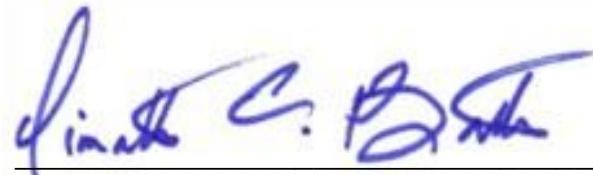
A district judge has a duty to conduct a “careful and complete” review of a magistrate judge’s R&R. *Williams v. Wainwright*, 681 F.2d 732, 732 (11th Cir. 1982) (per curiam) (quoting *Nettles v. Wainwright*, 677 F.2d 404, 408 (5th Cir. Unit B 1982)). This review may take different forms, however, depending on whether there are objections to the R&R. The district judge must “make a de novo determination of those portions of the [R&R] to which objection is made.” 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C). In contrast, those portions of the R&R to which no objection is made need only be reviewed for “clear error.” *Macort v. Prem, Inc.*, 208 F. App’x 781, 784 (11th Cir. 2006) (per curiam) (quoting *Diamond v. Colonial Life & Accident Ins.*, 416 F.3d 310, 315 (4th Cir. 2005)).²

² *Macort* dealt only with the standard of review to be applied to a magistrate’s factual findings, but the Supreme Court has indicated that there is no reason for the district court to apply a different standard to a magistrate’s legal conclusions. *Thomas v. Arn*, 474 U.S. 140, 150 (1985). Thus, district courts in this circuit have routinely reviewed both legal and factual conclusions for clear error. See *Tauber v. Barnhart*, 438 F. Supp. 2d 1366, 1373–74 (N.D. Ga. 2006) (collecting cases). This is to be contrasted with the standard of review on appeal, which distinguishes between the two. See *Monroe v. Thigpen*, 932 F.2d 1437, 1440 (11th Cir. 1991) (holding that when a magistrate’s findings of fact are adopted by the district court without objection, they are reviewed on appeal under a “plain error standard” while questions of law always remain subject to de novo review).

After conducting a complete and careful review of the R&R, the district judge “may accept, reject, or modify” the magistrate judge’s findings and recommendations. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C); *Williams*, 681 F.2d at 732. The district judge “may also receive further evidence or recommit the matter to the magistrate judge with instructions.” 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C).

The Court has conducted a careful and complete review of the R&R and finds no clear error in its factual or legal conclusions. Accordingly, the Court adopts as its Order the R&R [324]. Defendants’ motion [228] to dismiss the indictment for selective prosecution is denied. Defendants’ perfected motion [313] to dismiss the indictment is also denied.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 6th day of July, 2022.



Timothy C. Batten, Sr.
Chief United States District Judge